

This is good legislation and I urge the House to support it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today in supporting the passage of H.R. 3445, the Oceans Act. As the world celebrates the International Year of the Ocean, we have an excellent opportunity to initiate a major review of ocean policies in this Nation and to take actions to improve our understanding of ocean systems and the ocean environment as a whole.

As a coastal member and co-chair of the Coastal Caucus, I've always been supportive of protecting our oceans and coasts and realize the tremendous benefits they offer all Americans. Our oceans provide us with jobs, food, recreational as well as education opportunities, medicine, and transportation. Each year an estimated 180 million Americans visit the coast and nearly one third of our nation's Gross National Product is produced in coastal areas. Our oceans also play an important role in determining climate.

But all is not well with our oceans. Today, more than half of all 265 million Americans live within 50 miles of our shores. This has put tremendous pressure on our estuaries, coastal zone, and near and offshore areas. In 1996, nearly 2,200 health advisories were issued against the consumption of contaminated fish. In 1997, over 4,000 beach closings or warnings were issued due to pollution. Harmful algal blooms, like red tides and *pfisteria*, have been responsible for over \$1 billion in economic damages over the last decade. A 1997 National Marine Fisheries Service report to Congress stated that of the federally managed species for which sufficient data was available, 31% are "overfished." The list goes on and on.

H.R. 3445 attempts to rectify some of these problems by establishing a Commission on Ocean Policy. This Commission, which is similar to the original Stratton Commission of the late 1960's, will report to Congress and the President policy recommendations for how to do better with respect to our oceans, ultimately resulting in a coordinated National Ocean Policy.

While I support H.R. 3445, I am deeply disappointed that the bill before us today is much weaker than what was passed unanimously by the Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans subcommittee. Nevertheless, I applaud the efforts of Mr. FARR, Mr. SAXTON, and others for working so hard to bring this bill to the floor today.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote in favor of this legislation so that we can go to conference and have it signed into law before the end of the session. Cast a vote for the oceans! Vote yes on the Oceans Act!

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3445, the Oceans Act of 1998. In my capacity as chairman of the National Security R&D subcommittee, I have spent the last several years working to promote ocean protection. I have continued to address the issue of the protection of our seas at the international level through my work as the Chairman of the Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) Task Force on Oceans, and as the U.S. Vice President for the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Seas.

1998 has been declared the International Year of the Ocean in recognition of the importance of our ocean resources—the ocean's

fundamental importance to our economic well being, safety, health, and quality of life. We must continue to work to discover and to learn more about our oceans in order to achieve the long-term goals of fostering an increased awareness of the criticality of the ocean environment and assuring the sustainable use of the ocean for our continued national vitality.

It is clear that we need to get smarter about the ocean. For more than half of the American population, it is truly in our back yards. For the military, it is the primary platform for defense. For the economy, it produces one out of every three dollars of the Gross National Product. We can track the spread of cholera by understanding ocean circulation and we may find a cure for cancer in the biology of the sea. The seabed may be the next place for large-scale mining of precious ores.

We are surrounded by a medium about which we know less than we know about the moon! It is time to change this, and to enlarge our view of the ocean. We have mapped the entire sphere of the moon at resolutions sufficient to reveal geographic characteristics the size of a football field, as well as objects the size of bicycles within those fields. Yet, we have mapped less than seven percent of the ocean floor. Such mapping has been done at resolutions as much as ten thousand times poorer than the precision used for the Moon and Mars. We have yet to image at any resolution vast mountain chains, earthquake faults, shipwrecks, and a multitude of other features that would help us understand major features of the 197 million square miles of planet on which we live.

Clearly, the ocean is more than a beautiful vista for recreation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3445 to establish a Commission on Ocean Policy. In this way, we can be more committed to better understanding and protecting our interests in this incredible resource.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3445, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3445, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

#### COLLECTION OF FEES FOR MAKING OF MOTION PICTURES, TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS, AND SOUND TRACKS IN NATIONAL PARK AND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2993) to provide for the collection of fees for the making of motion pictures, television productions, and sound tracks in the National Park System and National Wildlife Refuge System units, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2993

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. FEE AUTHORITY AND REPEAL OF PROHIBITION.

(a) AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior (in this section referred to as the "Secretary") may permit, under terms and conditions considered necessary by the Secretary, the use of lands and facilities administered by the Secretary for the making of any motion picture, television production, sound-track, or similar project, if the Secretary determines that such use is appropriate and will not impair the values and resources of the lands and facilities.

(2) FEES.—(A) Any permit under this section shall require the payment of fees to the Secretary in an amount determined to be appropriate by the Secretary sufficient to provide a fair return to the government in accordance with subparagraph (B), except as provided in subparagraph (C). The amount of the fee shall be not less than the direct and indirect costs to the Government for processing the application for the permit and the use of lands and facilities under the permit, including any necessary costs of cleanup and restoration, except as provided in subparagraph (C).

(B) The authority of the Secretary to establish fees under this paragraph shall include, but not be limited to, authority to issue regulations that establish a schedule of rates for fees under this paragraph based on such factors as—

(i) the number of people on site under a permit;

(ii) the duration of activities under a permit;

(iii) the conduct of activities under a permit in areas designated by statute or regulations as special use areas, including wilderness and research natural areas; and

(iv) surface disturbances authorized under a permit.

(C) The Secretary may, under the terms of the regulations promulgated under paragraph (4), charge a fee below the amount referred to in subparagraph (A) if the activity for which the fee is charged provides clear educational or interpretive benefits for the Department of the Interior.

(3) BONDING AND INSURANCE.—The Secretary may require a bond, insurance, or such other means as may be necessary to protect the interests of the United States in activities arising under such a permit.

(4) REGULATIONS.—(A) The Secretary shall issue regulations implementing this subsection by not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) Within 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall review and, as appropriate, revise regulations issued under this paragraph. After that time, the